File No. 24/3/46-R

Collection No.

19 46

Secretariat of the

Governor General (Reforms)

Pros. Serial Nos

Subject.

Resolution in the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. Thirumala Row relating to the setting up of a constitution making body. - Not moved.

Previous References.

F.24/41-R.

Later References.

F.24/3/46-R.

S. 97 (Unbleached)
NGIPC—S2—1067(S&P) MFP (6862/A/M-661)—25-11-44—2,00,000.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

F.24/3/46-R

-2- 599 (REFORMS)

Serial No. (1) (2)

The late Mr. Kumarsankar Ray Chaudhury used to table a long resolution recommending the setting up of a Constituent Assembly"composed of the members of the various Legislative bodies in British India, Central and Provincial, and such bodies in the Indian States wherever they exist and 50 representatives of the Indian Princes and 50 representatives chosen by various Labour organisations existing in India". The practice used to be to admit this part of the resolution subject to the substitution for the words underlined of the words "such representatives as may be considered appropriate". Following this, we may recommend that Mr. Thirumala Row's resolution may be admitted with the words "together with such representatives of the Indian States as may be considered appropriate" substituted for the words "and five representatives similarly elected from the Chamber of Princes." If the omission suggested by the Political will mean that States will have no representation in the proposed exploratory commission.

(The resolution is the third of the alternatives in item No. 6 of the result of the ballot for the 19th)

F NO. 24/4/R
Pages 3-4
Notes & Corr.

Concur
11/2

D. 37-12/46

Pol Dept- (Mr. Wakefield)

P S V

S. G. G. (B) U/O No. D. 562/46-R dated the 11-2-46.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Pol. Dept concur

E.B. Wakefield.
4/2/46

E.B. WAKEFIELD.

D No. 242-FR. 12.2.46

P.S.V.O. to D.

P.D. U/O. No. D. 37-12/46 dated 12-2-46.

13/2/46

His agrees Reuben 14/2/46 SV

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

From prededing page.

A draft letter is placed below and may issue from P.S.V.

13.2.46.

P S V

S. G. G. (R.) No. D-562/46-R dt. 13.2.46.

D.O. No. 265-TR/46 dt. 13.2.46

The letter has issued and a copy is placed on the file.

14. 2. 46.

SGG (Reforms).

Serial No (3). Done

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

SECRETARIAT OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL (REFORMS).

Serial No.(4)

The Hon'ble Mr. Thirumala Rao has secured second place in the ballot for the 12th March, and the second alternative resolution proposed by him - relating to the setting up of a Constitution-making Body - is likely to be moved, since the first has already been debated.

Appendix

2. I think the Hon'ble the Leader of the House should intervene early in the debate and explain the position of Government to the House.

The policy of H.M.G. in regard to the setting up of a Constitution-making Body has been outlined in H.E.'s broadcast speech of the 19th Sept. last and in the Sec. of State's announcement in Parliament of the 19th Feb.'46. As Hon'ble Members will recollect, in the Cripps Draft Declaration of 1942 H.M.G. laid down in precise and clear terms a plan for forming a Constitution-making Body. HMG hoped that, if this plan was acceptable to the major political parties in India, it would lead to the earliest possible realisation of self-government in India. The Draft Declaration had to be withdrawn because it was not acceptable to the Indian parties. At the same time, no alternative scheme had been put forward. Meanwhile, with the termination of the war, the problem of Indian self-government has become one of great urgency. Accordingly, in his broadcast of the 19th Sept. last, His Excellency announced that as soon as elections were over he would hold preparatory discussions with elected representatives of British India as well as with representatives of Indian States in order to secure the widest possible measure of agreement as to the methods of framing a new Constitution for India. The object of these discussions will be to ascertain whether the proposals contained in the Cripps Declaration are acceptable or some alternative or modified scheme could be devised under which a Constitution-making Body acceptable to Indian opinion could be constituted.

Appendix

Appendix

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

It is also proposed to ascertain how best the Indian States can take their part in the Constitution-making Body. As the Secretary of State made it clear in Parliament, HMG attach paramount importance to a successful outcome of these discussions - importance not only to India and the British Commonwealth but to the peace of the world. Accordingly, HMG have decided to send out to India a special mission of Cabinet Ministers consisting of the Sec. of State for India, the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Stafford Cripps) and the First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. A. V. Alexander) to act in association with the Viceroy in this matter. It is very gratifying to note that this decision has been received with widespread approval both in India and in Britain. The Ministers are expected to arrive in India some time this month.

The Hon'ble the Leader of the House could then add that the House would no doubt wish His Excellency and the Cabinet Ministers all success in the undoubtedly difficult task that lay ahead of them. Having regard to the delicate negotiations which H.E. and the Cabinet Ministers will have to undertake, no useful purpose will be served by discussing a resolution in the terms put forward by the Hon'ble Mover, and the hope may be expressed that he may in the circumstances agree to withdraw it. If, however, the resolution is pressed to a division, I think Govt. members should oppose it.

3. H.E. should see.

6. 3. 46.

P.S.V

S. G. G. (R) U/O No. F. 24/3/46-R. dated the 6.3.46.

PSVO
D 347-F.R/46
& 6.3.46

H.E agrees. 7/3/46

The Hon'ble the Leader of the Council of State

S. G. G. (R) U/O No. F. 24/3/46-R. dated the 8-3-46.

8/3/46

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The Resolution was not moved. M.L.

12/3/46

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Serial No(1)

COUNCIL OF STATE.
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

~~Notice~~ ~~Admitted~~ ~~Starred~~ List No. 3.C

Serial No: 14

Register No. 10

This ~~Starred Question~~ Resolution by the Hon'ble Mr. Thirumala Row

~~If admitted~~ ~~is admitted and~~ will be placed on the list of business for meeting on the 19th February 1946.

2. Date on which Notice received in the Legislative Assembly Department.

3. Date of Notice List.

4. Date on which Notice received in this Department.

5. Date on which extract sent to Branch.

HONOURABLE MR. THIRUMALA ROW: This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that soon after the provincial elections are over and assemblies formed, a committee consisting of five representatives each from provincial legislatures and five each from the Central Assembly and Council of State elected by the system of proportional representation and five representatives similarly elected from the Chamber of Princes be formed as an exploratory commission to settle the procedure and constitution of a Constituent Assembly with full powers to draft a constitution and enter into a treaty with the British Government. The body shall co-opt. five legal experts to the constitution drafting body. Members so elected by legislatures need not necessarily be members thereof.

(Continue on reverse, if necessary.)

S. 176.
MFP—351 S&P—6923-41—(M-1179)—11-10-44—7,000.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Serial No(2) 2

No. D.26-R/46.
Political Department.

Dated New Delhi, the 6th February 1946.

SECRETARIAT OF THE
GOVERNOR GENERAL (REFORMS)
Dte. 11-2-46
File
Dy. No. 562/46-R

MEMORANDUM.

Resolution by the Hon'ble Mr. Thirumala Row about the constitution of a Committee to settle the procedure and constitution of Constituent Assembly.

The undersigned is directed to refer to Resolution No.14 in the Council of State List No.3-C., (copy attached) standing in the name of the Hon'ble Mr. Thirumala Row and to recommend that under proviso (ii)(d) of Rule 23(2) of the Indian Legislative Rules, the Governor General in his discretion may be pleased to withhold his consent to the moving of that portion of the Resolution which relates to Indian States, i.e. the words "and five representatives similarly elected from the Chamber of Princes."

Sd. E.B. Wakefield,
for Secretary to His Excellency
the Crown Representative.

To

The Secretary to His Excellency
the Governor-General (Personal).

Copy forwarded for information to:-

1. Secretary to His Excellency the Governor-General (Reforms)
2. Secretary of the Council of State.

By order, etc.,

E Wakefield
for Secretary to His Excellency
the Crown Representative.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

3

Council of State

Notice List of Questions and Resolutions

Questions entered in this list will, if admitted, be placed on the list or business for a meeting to be held after the 17th February, 1946.

x x x x

Serial No.			
14	Resolution	10	HONOURABLE MR. THIRUMALA RCW: This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that soon after the provincial elections are over and assemblies formed, a committee consisting of five representatives each from provincial legislatures and five each from the Central Assembly and Council of State elected by the system of proportional representation and five representatives similarly elected from the Chamber of Princes be formed as an exploratory commission to settle the procedure and constitution of a Constituent Assembly with full powers to draft a constitution and enter into a treaty with the British Government. The body shall co-opt. five legal experts to the constitution drafting body. Members so elected by legislatures need not necessarily be members thereof.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Serial No (3)

No. 794(24) The Viceroy's House,
New Delhi.

4

14th February 1946.

—10—

From

The Secretary to the Governor-General (Personal)

To

The Secretary to the Council of State.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor-General in his discretion has, under sub-clause (d) of clause (ii) of Rule 23(2) of the Indian Legislative Rules, approved the admission of the resolution proposed to be moved in the Council of State by the Hon'ble Mr. Thirumala Row (No. 14 in Notice List No. 3-C), subject to the substitution of the words "together with such representatives of Indian States as may be considered appropriate" for the words "and five representatives similarly elected from the Chamber of Princes".

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

Sd/- G.E.B. Abell.

Secretary to the Governor-General (Personal)

Copy forwarded for information to the Political Department and the Secretariat of the Governor-General (Reforms).

for Secretary to the ~~Governor-General~~ (Personal)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Serial No. 4

COUNCIL OF STATE.
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

~~Notice~~ / ~~Admitted~~ / ~~Final~~ List No.

Serial No.

Register No.

This ~~Starred Question~~ / Resolution by the Hon'ble Mr Thiramala Row

~~If admitted~~ / ~~is admitted and~~ will be placed on the list of business for meeting on the 12th March 1946.

2. Date on which Notice received in the Legislative Assembly Department.

3. Date of Notice List.

4. Date on which Notice received in this Department.

5. Date on which extract sent to Branch.

(*ii*) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that soon after the provincial elections are over and assemblies formed, a committee consisting of five representatives each from provincial legislatures and five each from the Central Assembly and Council of State elected by the system of proportional representation together with such representatives of Indian States as may be considered appropriate be formed as an exploratory commission to settle the procedure and constitution of a Constituent Assembly with full powers to draft a constitution and enter into a treaty with the British Government. The body shall co-opt five legal experts to the constitution drafting body. Members so elected by legislatures need not necessarily be members thereof.

S. 176.

(Continue on reverse, if necessary.)

MFP—351 S&P—6923-41—(M-1179)—11-10-44—7,000.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

COUNCIL OF STATE

CIRCULAR No. X

New Delhi, the 23rd February, 1946

To

1. ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE.
2. ALL DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

As a result of the ballot held on Saturday, the 23rd February, 1946, the following Resolutions will, subject to compliance with the Rules, be set down for discussion, on the date noted against them :—

SHAVAX A. LAL,
Secretary to the Council of State.

[*N.B.*—All Resolutions are within the period of notice subject to disallowance by the Governor General, *vide* Rule 22 (1), paragraph 119 of the Council of State Manual.]

Serial No.	By whom	Resolution	Date of meeting	Remarks
1	The Honourable Pandit H. N. Kunzru.	This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that immediate steps be taken to stop recruitment of non-Indians to the I.C.S. and the Indian Police.	12th March, 1946.	Notice received on the 11th February, 1946. Admitted by the President. [To be moved if not barred or disallowed.]
2	The Honourable Mr. M. Thirumala Row.	(*i*) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to urge upon His Majesty,s Government to effect immediately by an order in Council the separation of and constitution into two separate provinces the Telugu Speaking and the Tamil Speaking contiguous areas of the Madras Presidency in order to satisfy the administrative and cultural needs of the two areas, as recently announced by Sir N. Strathie, first Adviser, to the Governor of Madras.	Do.	Notice received on the 28th January, 1946. Admitted by the President. [To be moved if barred or diallowed.]
		or		
		(*ii*) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that soon after the provincial elections are over and assemblies formed, a committee consisting of five representatives each from provincial legislatures and five each from the Central Assembly and Council of State elected by the system of proportional representation together with such representatives of Indian States as may be considered appropriate be formed as an exploratory commission to settle the procedure and constitution of a Constituent Assembly with full powers to draft a constitution and enter into a treaty with the 'British Government. The body shall co-opt five legal experts to the constitution drafting body. Members so elected by legislatures need not necessarily be members thereof.	Do.	Do. [To be moved if No. (*i*) is barred or disallowed.]
		or		
		(*iii*) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that all drugs and medical and surgical equipment of the American Army in India be purchased by the Government of India for use by the health services of the country.	Do.	Do. [To be moved if Nos. (*i*) and (*ii*) are barred or disallowed.]
		or		
		(*iv*) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a deputation of five non-official elected members, three from the Assembly and two from the Council, be deputed to Burma, Malaya and Signapore to investigate the disabilities and conditions of Indians in these Countries and recommend suitable steps for their remedy.	Do.	Do. [To be moved if Nos. (*i*), (*ii*) and (*iii*) are barred or disallowed.]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Serial No.	By whom	Resolution	Date of meeting	Remarks
		or		
		(v) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Military College be started in the northern area of the Madras Presidency preferably in Cocanada which has a large newly built military area in tact and was the training base for amphibian operations and which is the most suitable place for air, land and sea training.	12th March, 1946.	Notice received on the 28th January, 1946. Admitted by the President. [To be moved if Nos. (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) are barred or disallowed.]
3	The Honourable Rai Bahadur Satyendra Kumar Das.	This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to direct all the Provincial Governments to continue to pay all the State and Security prisoners their allowances at the rate at which they were being paid at the time of their release upto six months after their release so that they may re-seek out their source of income.	Do.	Notice received on the 26th January, 1946. Admitted by the President. [To be moved if not barred or disallowed.]
4	The Honourable Mr. Nikunja Kishore Das.	This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council, that in view of the overlapping of the existing constituencies of the Council of State, with Provincial Boundaries, steps be taken, before the next general election, to split up the plural member constituencies and re-distribute the seats among the Provinces in such a manner, as each Province may get adequate and independent representation in the Council of State.	Do.	Notice received on the 22nd February, 1946. Not yet admitted by the President. [To be moved if not barred or disallowed.]
5	The Honourable Mr. Surput Singh.	(i) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that for the real well-being of the country and in the interests of national economy, sending abroad of Indian students for purposes of study, research and practical training should be forthwith stopped and that instead specialists, experts, trained and skilled technicians should be brought out from foreign countries on contract basis to help and foster higher education institute and expand research and assist and stimulate practical training within the country itself.	Do.	[Notice received on the 14th January, 1946. Admitted by the President. [To be moved if not barred or disallowed.]
		or		
		(ii) This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that for due protection of the interests of consumers of the genuine ghee, it should be statutorily provided under penalty that some harmless colouring substance should be put into the Vegetable Ghee and what passes under that name in the market, so as to provide a clear distinction between the two.	Do.	Do. [To be moved if No. (i) is barred or disallowed.]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

GIPD—M—1942LD—25-2-46—500

BROADCAST SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY, AT NEW DELHI ON WEDNESDAY, THE 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1945.

After my recent discussions with His Majesty's Government in London, they authorised me to make the following announcement:—

"As stated in the gracious Speech from the Throne at the Opening of Parliament, His Majesty's Government are determined to do their utmost to promote in conjunction with the leaders of Indian opinion the early realisation of full self-government in India. During my visit to London they have discussed with me the steps to be taken.

"An announcement has already been made that elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures, so long postponed owing to the war, are to be held during the coming cold weather. Thereafter His Majesty's Government earnestly hope that ministerial responsibility will be accepted by political leaders in all Provinces.

"It is the intention of His Majesty's Government to convene as soon as possible a constitution making body, and as a preliminary step they have authorised me to undertake, immediately after the elections, discussions with representatives of the Legislative Assemblies in the Provinces, to ascertain whether the proposals contained in the 1942 declaration are acceptable or whether some alternative or modified scheme is preferable. Discussions will also be undertaken with the representatives of the Indian States with a view to ascertaining in what way they can best take their part in the constitution-making body.

"His Majesty's Government are proceeding to the consideration of the content of the treaty which will require to be concluded between Great Britain and India.

"During these preparatory stages, the government of India must be carried on, and urgent economic and social problems must be dealt with. Furthermore, India has to play her full part in working out the new World Order. His Majesty's Government have therefore further authorised me, as soon as the results of the Provincial elections are published, to take steps to bring into being an Executive Council which will have the support of the main Indian parties"

That is the end of the announcement which His Majesty's Government have authorised me to make. It means a great deal. It means that His Majesty's Government are determined to go ahead with the task of bringing India to self-government at the earliest possible date. They have, as you can well imagine, a great number of most important and urgent problems

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

on their hands; but despite all their preoccupations they have taken time, almost in their first days of office, to give attention to the Indian problem, as one of the first and most important. That fact is a measure of the earnest resolve of His Majesty's Government to help India to achieve early self-government.

The task of making and implementing a new Constitution for India is a complex and difficult one, which will require goodwill, co-operation and patience on the part of all concerned. We must first hold elections so that the will of the Indian electorate may be known. It is not possible to undertake any major alteration of the franchise system. This would delay matters for at least two years. But we are doing our best to revise the existing electoral rolls efficiently After the elections, I propose to hold discussions with representatives of those elected, and of the Indian States to determine the form which the Constitution-Making Body should take, its powers and procedure. The draft declaration of 1942 proposed a method of setting up a Constitution-Making Body but His Majesty's Government recognise that, in view of the great issues involved and the delicacy of the minority problems, consultation with the people's representatives is necessary before the form of the Constitution-Making Body is finally determined.

The above procedure seems to His Majesty's Government and myself the best way open to us to give India the opportunity of deciding her destiny We are well aware of the difficulties to be overcome but are determined to overcome them. I can certainly assure you that the Government and all sections of the British people are anxious to help India, which has given us so much help in winning this war. I for my part will do my best, in the service of the people of India, to help them to arrive at their goal, and I firmly believe that it can be done.

It is now for Indians to show that they have the wisdom, faith and courage to determine in what way they can best reconcile their differences and how their country can be governed by Indians for Indians.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Cuttings from Newspapers.

1. Name of Paper The Hindu Marked by

2. Published at Madras Dated 20.2.46

NEGOTIATIONS IN INDIA

PETHICK-LAWRENCE'S ENSUING VISIT

ANNOUNCEMENT IN PARLIAMENT

CRIPPS & A. V. ALEXANDER TO JOIN MISSION

LONDON, Feb. 19.

Three British Cabinet Ministers are going to India to discuss with leaders of Indian opinion the framing of an Indian constitution. They are Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade and Mr. Albert Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty. This was officially announced in the Lords to-day.

The announcement was made by Lord Pethick-Lawrence who said: "The House will recall that on 19th September, 1945, on his return to India after discussions with the British Government, the Viceroy made a statement of policy in the course of which he outlined the positive steps to be taken immediately after the Central and Provincial elections to promote, in conjunction with leaders of Indian opinion, early realisation of full Self-Government in India.

"Those steps include: first, preparatory discussions with elected representatives of British India and with Indian States in order to secure the widest measure of agreement as to the method of framing a Constitution.

"Second, the setting up of a Constitution-making body and third, the bringing into being of an Executive Council having the support of the main Indian parties.

"Elections at the Centre were held at the end of last year and in some of the Provinces they are also over and responsible Governments are in the process of formation. In other Provinces, polling dates are spread over the next few weeks. With the approach of the end of the electoral campaign, the British Government have been considering the most fruitful method of giving effect to the programme to which I have referred.

"In view of the paramount importance, not only to India and to the British Commonwealth, but to the peace of the world, of a successful outcome of discussions with leaders of Indian opinion, the British Government have decided with the approval of His Majesty the King to send out to India a special mission of Cabinet Ministers, consisting of the Secretary of State for India (Lord Pethick-Lawrence), the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Stafford Cripps) and the First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. A. V. Alexander) to act in association with the Viceroy in this matter

LORD WAVELL'S CONCURRENCE

"This decision has the full concurrence of Lord Wavell.

"I feel sure that the House will give its support and goodwill to the Ministers and the Viceroy in carrying out a task in which the future of 400,000,000 people and crucial issues both for India and the world will be at stake.

"During the absence of these Ministers, the Prime Minister will himself assume responsibility for Admiralty business and the Lord President (Mr. Herbert Morrison) will be in charge of the Board of Trade.

"So far as India and Burma offices are concerned, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, (Major Arthur Henderson) will be in charge during my own absence, but he will be able to rely upon the personal advice of the Prime Minister whenever it is required and he will refer important issues to him, particularly those affecting Burma where the Government will not, like the Viceroy, be in personal touch with myself."

PREMIER'S STATEMENT IN COMMONS

REPLY TO MR. EDEN'S QUESTION

The Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, in making a similar statement in the Commons, added that the mission would go to India towards the end of March.

Mr. Anthony Eden, acting Leader of the Opposition, said: "While it is clear I presume, that the Secretary for India will carry with him in his person the authority of the Secretary of State, can he also be assured that in respect of all matters which would normally require Cabinet decision there will be reference to Cabinet authority in London—that is that these three Ministers will not carry with them anything in the nature of Cabinet authority?

"I would also ask whether Parliament will have an opportunity of discussing any developments of policy that may arise out of this visit and may I tell the Prime Minister that, though it is hard to say at present, it may be that we should like to have an opportunity to discuss India before the Ministers leave?

"Finally, and the most important of all, may I ask the Prime Minister to make it clear that the main lines of British policy in respect of India still stand, that is to say, that it is the responsibility of Indians and not the Ministers from this country to bring about a Constitution-making body?

Mr. Attlee: With regard to the first point, it is no use sending out responsible Ministers unless they have a degree of responsibility to act. Clearly, therefore, within the terms laid down by Cabinet decisions, those Ministers must be able to act, but also, of course, on major matters of policy, they will refer back for Cabinet decision. But if they are going to negotiate they must have power to negotiate as would the Viceroy if he were acting on behalf of the Government.

With regard to matters coming before the House, clearly anything arising out of these discussions will be the subject of legislation and will have to come before the House. I am not sure whether it is feasible to have a debate before they go out. In any case, there is a Bill coming down to the House designed to give the Viceroy more elbow room in the formation of his Cabinet on which discussion could arise.

Perhaps Mr. Eden will discuss with the Lord President (Mr. Herbert Morrison) whether that is an adequate opportunity or not. Undoubtedly it is our intention to set up a machinery in agreement with Indians whereby the Indian people themselves will decide their destinies.

NO TIME-LIMIT FOR TALKS

Mr. Reginald Sorensen (Labour), one of the British Parliamentary Delegation, which has just returned from India, asked whether a time-limit was placed on the visit. He hoped they would do their utmost to solve the problem and remain there until it was solved. They had the best wishes of the House.

Mr. Attlee: There is of course no time-limit laid down, but one hopes they will not be kept out there too long. I echo Mr. Sorensen's hopes—no harm in hoping. I hope they will be successful in as short a time as possible.

LORDS' SUPPORT

In the House of Lords, Viscount Simon (Liberal) said that all joined in the hope that this plan might bear fruit and that India would regard it as proof of the genuine desire of this country to help towards a solution of her intractable constitutional problems.

Government could be assured of the goodwill of the Opposition "in this bold effort to bring about a happier state of things in India."

Viscount Samuel (Liberal) welcomed this fresh effort to break the persistent deadlock. He hoped that the strong initiative now being taken by the Government would elicit some helpful response from the contending interests in India. The Viceroy commanded a very general measure of confidence and it was to be hoped that he would find his hands strengthened by this delegation so that the objects he had so long had in view might be forwarded.

Viscount Samuel hoped that the Indian people would appreciate that the British people, in giving Sir Stafford Cripps leave of absence for their sake, were accepting very considerable sacrifice of their own immediate interests.

A very large part of the work of post-war reconstruction of the British was in the hands of the President of the Board of Trade and the functions he performed in relation to industry and foreign trade were of urgent and fundamental importance.

Yet, Sir Stafford Cripps had rendered such signal services to India, and was so fully acquainted with all the necessities of the case that it was clear that he should go to India.

The Earl of Munster, former Under-Secretary for India, said the whole House would wish the delegation God-speed and good luck.

Lord Pethick-Lawrence, replying, said that the announcement did not alter the statement made by the Viceroy in September about framing a Constitution for India. The Viceroy's hand would be strengthened by the presence of Members of the Government.

It remained the intention of the British Government that it was for the Indians to decide the basis of their own constitutional structure. The mission would stay no longer than was vitally necessary, but there was no desire that it should return with its work only half done.

"WOULD CARRY CABINET'S AUTHORITY"

The Mission would act as representative of the Cabinet in India and carry the authority of the Cabinet. No doubt, when it went, it would be given certain specific instructions of direction and the general purpose of its procedure.

As far as he could commit himself at the moment, he did not think the proposals would be out of the normal constitutional procedure. The Mission were not going to override the Viceroy. They would be associated with him.

The presence of the Mission in India would not alter the substantive relationship between the Cabinet and the Viceroy. He would verify whether his presence in India as Secretary of State altered that fact. He understood that there would have to be a definite treaty between this country and India.

Lord Pethick-Lawrence said the Dominions had been informed. He would not like to be too specific about the precise nature of the Executive Council referred to in the announcement. It was hoped to base the Viceroy's Executive Council during the period, while the Constitution-making Body was proceeding with its labours, on the main Indian parties.—Reuter

CABINET DETERMINED TO GO AHEAD

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, Feb 18.

In view of the gravity of the famine situation, it would not be surprising if steps towards the reconstruction of the Central Government were speeded up—"It would be highly desirable," said Mr. W. G. Cove, to me to-day. This opinion is expressed also by others who have had an opportunity of hearing at first-hand from the returned members of the Parliamentary Delegation an account of the seriousness of the economic and political crisis in India. The possibility of the Muslim League's opposition to any change at the Centre is not being lost sight of for a moment, but there is a growing body of opinion that no single political party should be allowed indefinitely to hold up necessary changes. Sir Stafford Cripps has expressed himself in this sense to more than one recent visitor and I understand that he has stated categorically that the Labour Government would not continue to tolerate the stalemate simply because one or other "element in Indian life" insists on standing out.